



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education
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To: Rachel F. Potter
Information and Regulatory Affairs
Office of Management and Budget (OMB)

From: Leonard L. Haynes, Director
Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education

Cc: Joe Schubart
Cassandra Courtney

Date: February 16, 2006

Re: Revision of Comprehensive Program Grant Application

The grant application for The Comprehensive Program (OMB 1840-514) expires July 31, 2006. Attached is FIPSE's new application package. A few editorial changes have been made for style or clarification. The substantive changes are as follows:

1. Electronic submission of applications through the Department of Education's e-Application system has been made mandatory. This was voluntary when the application was last cleared. The Department of Education's approved language for mandatory submission of e-Applications has replaced that for voluntary submission.
2. The review for the competition has been changed from a two-stage process with a 5-page preliminary application and invitations for a 25-page final application to a single-stage review process with a 20-page application. All references to "preliminary" and "final" proposals have been removed. This change in the review process is being made due to (a) time constraints on the review process associated with appropriation delays and resulting inadequate time for two separate e-Reader review periods required under a two-stage process and (b) the competition's anticipated transition in FY 2007 to Grants.gov, which does not easily accommodate a two-stage review process.
3. The invitational priorities for the competition have been changed to address the following areas of particular national need:
 - Access to quality, affordable higher education.
 - Curricular alignment from high school through college.
 - Teacher preparation in science and mathematics.

The priorities as presented in the application package have been reviewed and approved by the Assistant Secretary for Postsecondary Education. They are consistent with the competition's previous invitational priorities, although more focused.

4. The criteria for evaluation of proposals, chosen from those provided in 34 CFR 75, have been reduced from seven to five. The two criteria removed were duplicative and/or have shown marginal discriminating value in the review process. The two were:
 - #5 – The quality of the management plan. (This was not sufficiently different from criterion #3 – The quality of the project’s design.)
 - #6 – The quality of project personnel.The removal of these criteria is intended to reduce burden for applicants and reviewers.
5. The special Budget Summary Form for the Comprehensive Program currently in use has been replaced by the Department of Education’s Budget Information Form (ED 524).

Should you have questions, please contact the competition coordinator, Cassandra Courtney at (202) 502-7506 or cassandra.courtney@ed.gov.